

BASARA



Story and Art by **Yumi Tamura**

Vol. 16



shōjo

BASARA™

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Yumi Tamura

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Vol. #16

Shôjo Edition

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Ageha

Capable of staying the hand of a King and arranging for 1000 head of cattle on short notice, this mysterious desert nomad seems to be

extremely informed and influential. He also has a secret identity—Kicho, a famous performer among a traveling troupe of dancing ladies. Ageha lost his left eye when the Red King blinded it as payment for his rescue of 12-year-old Sarasa. Now, he is "Tatara's" slightly mercenary ally. Ageha uses his owl companion, Kagero, to carry messages to his contacts.



Masunaga

One of the leaders of Kazuno.



Kikune/Kasane

One of the deadly "Four Virtues," Kikune is a spy sent on a mission to the North by the White King. Under the name "Kasane," she works for

Lady Purple in the Purple Palace.

The Red King/Shuri

Once in charge of Midwestern Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu, he is the youngest of the King of Japan's four sons. Prophesied to bring misfortune, King Ukon branded him a slave. Hounded by threats from abroad and his family, he is a ruthless but effective ruler, crushing those who oppose him. Byakko Village is just one in a long list of rebel strongholds he has destroyed. Ignorant of her secret identity and hiding his own, Shuri's interactions with Sarasa reveal hints of his unhealthy family history and his desire to unite Japan in peace. Tragically, they fell in love, only to discover the truth on the battlefield, a battle he lost. He is now in the clutches of Asagi, who rescued him from his attempted suicide.



Raizo (a.k.a. The Count, Iron Mask)

Once the perpetually masked servant of the Blue King, Raizo is the last survivor of the Seiryu clan, ancient allies of

Byakko. After Sarasa's exposure of the Blue King's false divinity, Raizo and his rebels rose up and now rule Seiran.



Muratake

Rescued from a blizzard by Nachi, Muratake is one of the four elite spies who aid Asagi.



Asagi

His pale skin and refined demeanor belie his ruthlessness and deadly skills. Once one of the Blue King's personal bodyguards, Asagi

allowed the Blue King to die, for Asagi himself is the true Blue King. Currently allied with "Tatara," his participation with the rebels is primarily out of personal curiosity and entertainment, not noble intentions.



Sarasa (disguised as Tatara)

When Sarasa and her twin brother Tatara were born, a prophecy was made. "This is a child of destiny..." The people of Byakko Village assumed Tatara was the "Boy of Destiny," and Sarasa grew up mostly in his shadow. When the Red King's forces kill Tatara, Sarasa takes up her brother's name and fights in his guise, not realizing that she is the real Child of Destiny. Although generally a secret, she has finally confessed her gender to her closest allies. During past visits to hot springs, she met and fell in love with Shuri, only to discover on the battlefield that he is the Red King. She has yet to recover from the emotional blow.



Lady Purple

Wife to the Black King, eldest son of King Ukon and Lord of the Northern Territories, some say she is more powerful than her husband.



Takumi

Son of the Priest of Aoba Temple, where Sarasa is currently staying, he is kind and sweet and infatuated with Sarasa.



Taro

One of Ageha's many acquaintances, he is a reporter with ambitions of writing the history of Tatara's exploits. Taro has fol-

lowed Sarasa to the north and is reporting on the mysterious "Nightingale" and "White Tiger" who visit the battlefields of the North.

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In the early 21st century, an apocalypse turned fertile lands into deserts and brought human civilization to its knees. Control of Japan passed into the hands of tyrannical kings. Three hundred years later, a new hope was born.

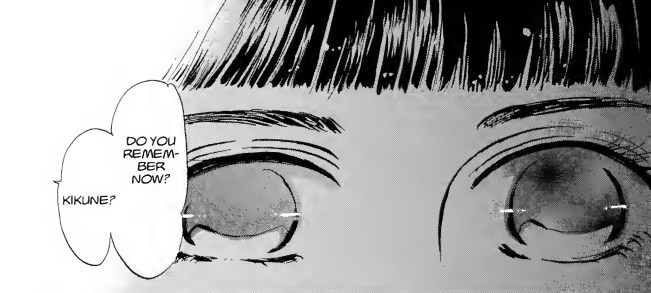
At the birth of a rebel chieftain's twins, the blind prophet Nagi predicted, "This is a child of destiny, one who will grow to lead the people and be the light in the sky of our nation's future." The people of Byakko Village placed their hopes in Tataru, their Chief's son, raising him as the "Boy of Destiny."

With the tyrannical Ukon XV ruling Japan through his ruthless sons, a better tomorrow can only be achieved through strife and bloodshed. When the "Boy of Destiny" is killed by the Red King's forces, it is up to his twin sister Sarasa to lead their people in his name, or all will be lost.

Sarasa has achieved victory over the Red King in Kyushu and the Blue King in Seiran, gaining many allies along the way. She has also proven herself in Okinawa to the south and the Tohoku region in the north. Her closest comrades now know the truth about her gender; her confession has galvanized them further. At last, the rebel clans possessing the four swords of legend have been united.

Meanwhile, the Red King's recklessness has inspired a coup. After fleeing alone, Shuri has been forced to reevaluate his perspective of the world and start from scratch to prove himself a worthy leader. Despite his newly acquired allies in Shikoku he has failed in battle against Tataru. Worse, although he and Sarasa have fallen in love, they have finally learned the truth about their secret identities. Torn by the discovery, Shuri attempts suicide only to be "rescued" by Asagi.

Too numb to be any use, Sarasa is abandoned on Mt. Fuji by Ageha, where she meets a wise man who directs her to go north. After rescuing the head priest's daughter from drowning, she now works at Aoba Temple in Shikoku City. There, she lives quietly while trying to regain her emotional balance.



DO YOU REMEM-
BER
NOW?

KIKUNE?

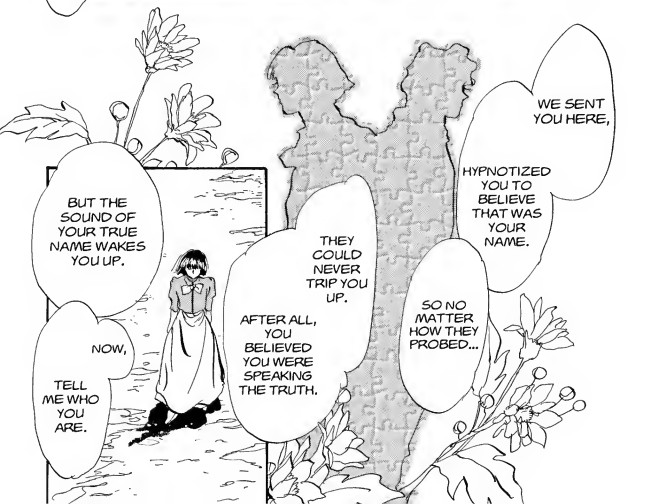


YOU
ARE NOT--

"KASA-
NE."



DO YOU REMEM-
BER YOUR
MISSION?



BUT THE
SOUND OF
YOUR TRUE
NAME WAKES
YOU UP.

NOW,

TELL
ME WHO
YOU
ARE.

THEY
COULD
NEVER
TRIP YOU
UP.

AFTER ALL,
YOU
BELIEVED
YOU WERE
SPEAKING
THE TRUTH.

WE SENT
YOU HERE,

HYPNOTIZED
YOU TO
BELIEVE
THAT WAS
YOUR NAME.

SO NO
MATTER
HOW THEY
PROBED...

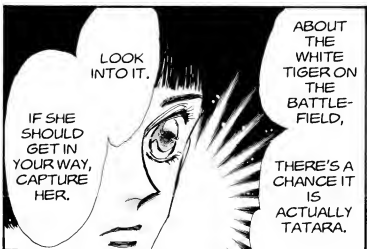
VERTICAL TAM-TAM TIME ①

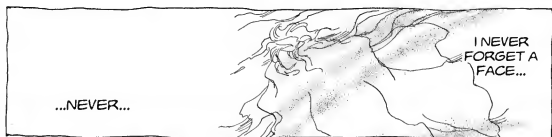
The missions of the Four Virtues require that they're good at disguise.

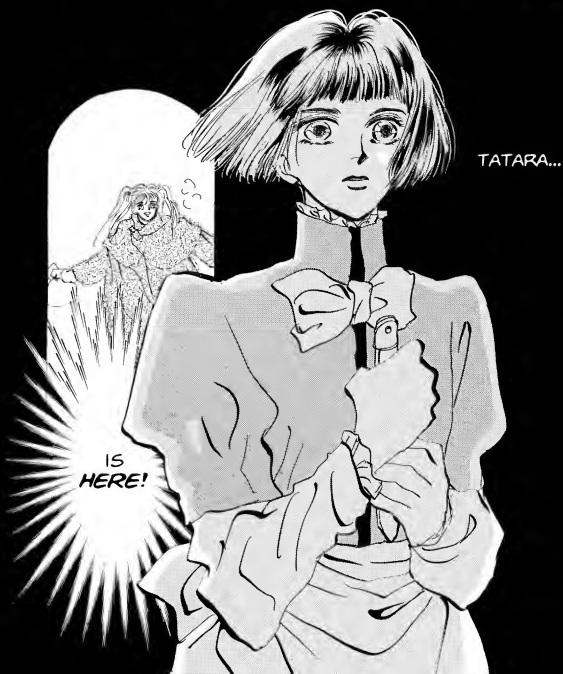
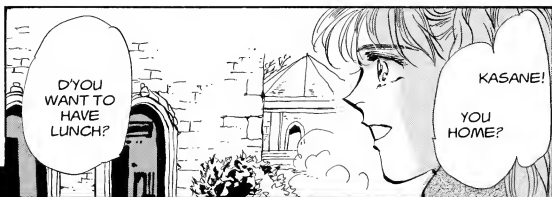


Kasane (Kikune) looked like this a little while ago. But it's not a matter of which is her "real" appearance. She simply changes her looks according to the circumstances.

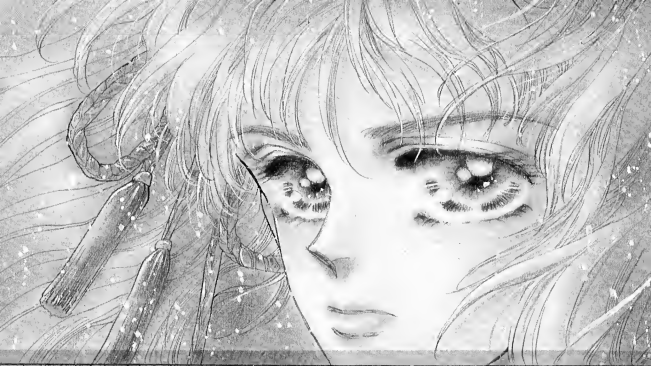
TAMU



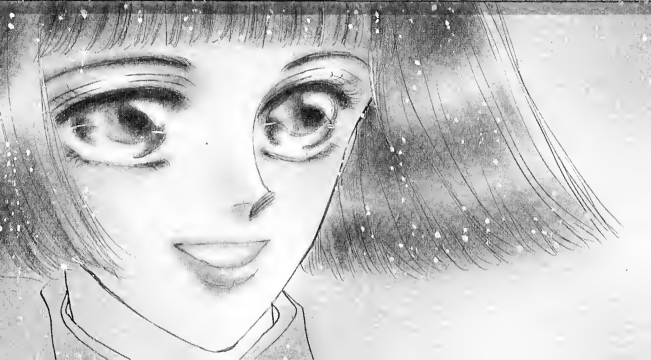








AMBER TALE 3: FRIEND



HI,
KASANE!





AND
SHE'S
HERE.



TATA-
RA...

...IS
SARASA.

TINY TAM-TAM TIME ①

Hello!

Thanks for all your support!

And your letters! ♡

And thanks to everyone
who came to the autograph
session! ♡..

It was a hot summer,
wasn't it? ♡ ♡ ♡

[That was in Japan in 1995.-PD]



THANKS FOR SENDING ME
BIRTHDAY PRESENTS!

They make me happy! ♡ ☺

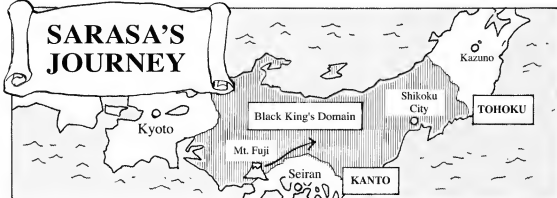
BASARA'S BEEN KIND OF DEPRESSING
LATELY, BUT PLEASE HANG ON! ♡
IT'LL GET LIGHTER SOON.

The cover theme for this
volume was "sitting by
the fireside." I really like
the traditional Japanese
sunken hearth. There's a
bonus episode at the end,
too! ♡ ☺

Let me know what
you think!

Later! TAMU

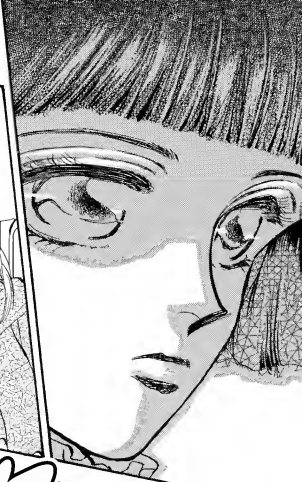
SARASA'S JOURNEY





KASANE,
ARE YOU
ON YOUR
LUNCH
BREAK?

I'M
COM-
ING IN,
OKAY?



VS



WAY TOO
SLOW,
SARASA.

SLOW.

THAT'S
COLD!

WHAT'S
THE BIG
IDEA!?

WELL,
EXCUSE
ME!

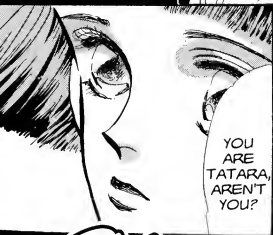


WATER PISTOL.





TOO
SLOW...
TATA-
RA.



YOU
ARE
TATARA,
AREN'T
YOU?



PLUM

VSH



KASA-
NE...!?

YOU'D
FOUND
HER
ALREADY?

WELL
DONE,
KIKU-
NE.



IF
SO,

I
SHOULD
TAKE
YOU
WITH
ME.



ARE YOU
THE TRUE
TATARA?

THEN...

THE ONE
IN THE
WEST
IS AN
IMPOSTOR?



UME-
WAKA!

I
THOUGHT
YOU WERE
GONE!







DON'T
STRUGGLE,
OR YOU
MIGHT GET
HURT...



KIKU-
NE.

IF
YOU ARE
BETRAY-
ING
US--



HELP!

THIEF!

BURG-
LAR!

HELP!

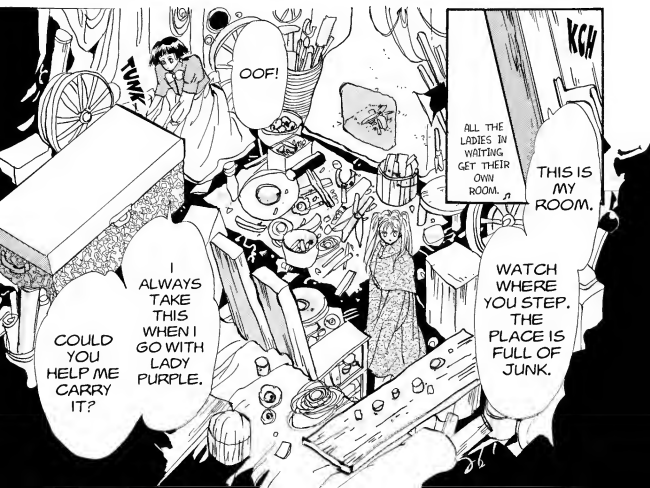


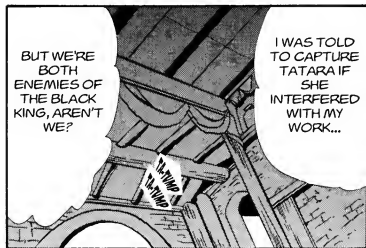
KIKU-
NE!



BMP
KIKU-
NE!?



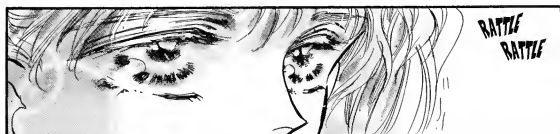
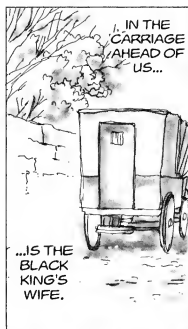






THIS DOESN'T...







AT THIS
ARBORETUM
WE'RE
GOING
TO...

SHE'S TAKING
CARE OF KIDS
ORPHANED BY
THE WAR.

LADY
PURPLE
WORKS
HARD FOR
THE
PUBLIC
WELFARE.

RATTLE
THIS IS
STILL MUCH
BETTER
THAN KANTO
BACK
WHEN THE
BLUE KING
WAS IN
CHARGE.

IT WAS
AWFUL!



HELLO!

YOU'RE
HERE!

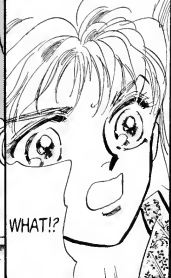
LADY
PURPLE!



I'VE BROUGHT
TREATS FOR
EVERYONE
WHO'S BEEN
GOOD.

HELLO,
CHILDREN.





TAKA

TAKA

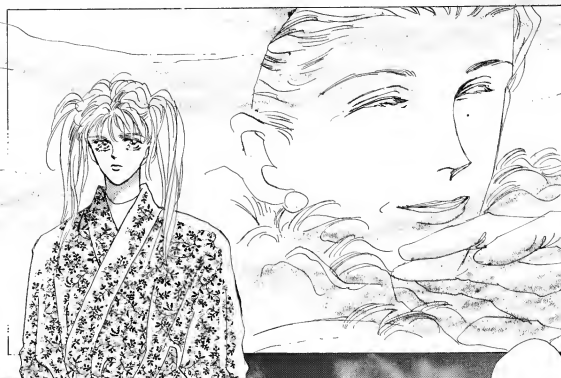
TAKA





AND GOES OUT
OF CONTROL.

UNFORTU-
NATELY,
SOMETIMES
IT BREAKS
DOWN...



NO.

THE BLACK
KING'S ONLY
CHILD IS BY HIS
MISTRESS.

DOES SHE
HAVE ANY
KIDS?

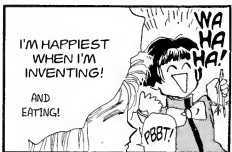
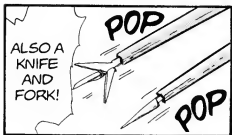


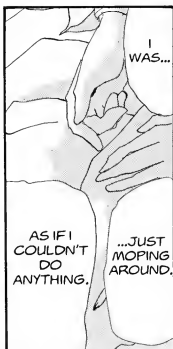
ALWAYS
A STEP
AHEAD.

SHE'S
GOOD AT
GETTING
PEOPLE
TO DO
THINGS.

SHE USES
THE
"CARROT
AND
STICK."

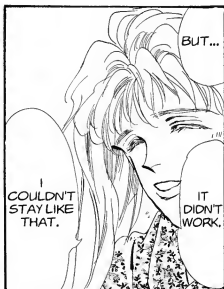








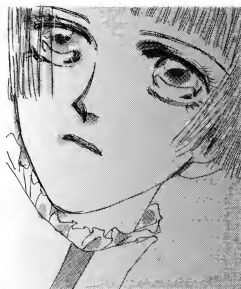
IN THE
FOREST...



BUT...

I
COULDN'T
STAY LIKE
THAT.

IT
DIDN'T
WORK.



...AND
PUSH
MYSELF...

...TO
STAY
ALIVE.

I
HAD
TO
MOVE...

...TO
WALK...



I LET A
CHILD DIE
WHEN I
COULDN'T...

HELPED
HIM...

BUT...



HELP!

TATA-
RA!

TATA-
RA!

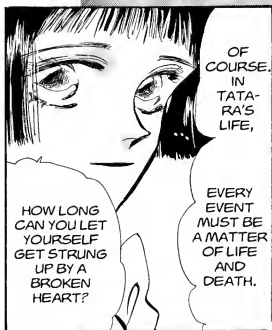


BEING
HUNGRY
IS THE
WORST
FEELING.

RIGHT!

NO
MATTER
WHAT,
YOU'LL
GET
HUNGRY!

GOTTA
PEE,
TOO!



I COULDN'T BREATHE.

BUT I KEPT STRUGGLING.

I WAS BEING SWEEP AWAY.



AGEHA...

YEAH...

BUT I DON'T
KNOW IF HE
SAW IT
THAT WAY.



SO
WHOEVER
LEFT
YOU AT
MT. FUJI
DESERVES
SOME
CREDIT.

YOU MIGHT
NEVER HAVE
SNAPPED OUT
OF IT IF YOU'D
STAYED HOLED
UP IN YOUR
ROOM.

IT DOESN'T HELP TO BE TAKEN
CARE OF ALL THE TIME.



YOU'VE
HAD
ENOUGH.

I'M
DONE.



AGEHA...

BUT IT
FEELS
MUCH
WORSE...

WHEN
THEY
GIVE UP
ON YOU.

AGEHA...

IT'S HARD
WHEN
PEOPLE
EXPECT SO
MUCH FROM
YOU...



MAY-
BE.

BUT
Y'KNOW...



HEH.

I
WISH I
WERE.

BUT...

I
KEEP
CAUSING
PROB-
LEMS...



THIS ISN'T
HOW I
IMAGINED
TATARA.

I EXPECTED
SOME
CHARISMATIC
MILITARY
GENIUS.



...WHO NEVER
FEELS PAIN OR
DOUBT ABOUT
THE THINGS THEY
DO.

IF I
COULD
CHOOSE
MY
SAVIOR...

I WOULDN'T
WANT IT TO BE
SOME
SUPERHUMAN...





...I
COULD
FORSAKE
EVERYTHING.

BRR!
THE COLD
IS COMING
BACK!

AGEHA...

I CAN
FINALLY
LAUGH
AGAIN.

...I
REALLY
THOUGHT...

BUT
FOR A
TIME...

SARASA!?

TAKU-
MI!

OH!
IS THAT
TAKUMI?

WHAT
ABOUT
YOUR
STORY?

YEAH?

LISTEN
TO MY
STORY
NOW!

BUT THE
OTHER
ONE'S THE
GUY I LIKE.

HE'S SO NICE!
AND HANDSOME!

I WORK
WITH
THREE
GUYS.
TWO ARE
UNDER-
HANDED
AND
NASTY...



A
DRAFT
NO-
TICE!



I
GOT
MY RED
PAPER.

SAD,
HUH?

I'D
THOUGHT I'D
BE EXEMPT
BECAUSE OF
MY DAD'S
INFLUENCE.



IT'S
BOTH.

HUH?
I
THOUGHT
THIS
WAS THE
ARBO-
RETUM...

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
AT THE
GOVERN-
MENT
OFFICE?

WELL,
IT
HAP-
PENED.



MOST OF MY
FRIENDS HAVE
GONE
ALREADY.

THEY'RE ON THE
BATTLEFIELD.

I'LL
BE
FINE.

NO!

DON'T
GO!



IT
WON'T
BE
LIKE
THAT!

SARA-
SA?

DON'T
GO!

AND I WANT TO
CHECK OUT THIS
WHITE TIGER AND
NIGHTINGALE.

DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE MIGHT
REALLY GIVE ME
A BOOST IN
LIFE.

THE
GOVERNMENT'S
FULL OF WAR
HEROES.

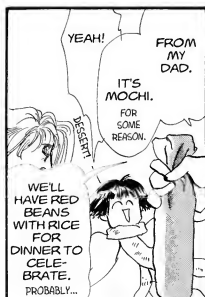


...A
BATTLE-
FIELD...

IS A
PLACE
WHERE
YOU GO
TO DIE.

NO
MATTER
WHAT
WAR...

NO
MATTER
THE
REASON...



YEAH!

FROM
MY DAD.

IT'S
MOCHI.
FOR
SOME
REASON.

WE'LL
HAVE RED
BEANS
WITH RICE
FOR
DINNER TO
CELEBRATE.
PROBABLY...



TAKU-
MI...

THEN I'D
BETTER
GIVE IT
ALL I'VE
GOT!

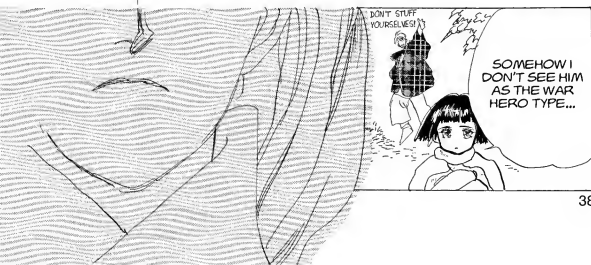
OH,
HERE
YOU
GO.



YOU'RE
WORRIED
ABOUT
ME?

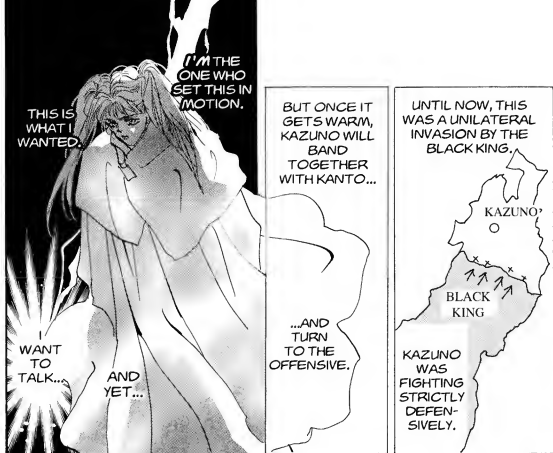
I WON'T DIE
THAT EASILY.

I
THINK
I LIKE
THAT.



DON'T STUFF
YOURSELVES!

SOMEHOW I
DON'T SEE HIM
AS THE WAR
HERO TYPE...



THIS IS
WHAT I
WANTED.

I'M THE
ONE WHO
SET THIS IN
MOTION.

BUT ONCE IT
GETS WARM,
KAZUNO WILL
BAND
TOGETHER
WITH KANTO...

UNTIL NOW, THIS
WAS A UNILATERAL
INVASION BY THE
BLACK KING.

KAZUNO'

BLACK
KING

KAZUNO
WAS
FIGHTING
STRICTLY
DEFEN-
SIVELY.

I
WANT
TO TALK...

AND
YET...

...AND
TURN
TO THE
OFFENSIVE.



ALONE?

...TO
LADY
PURPLE.



KASANE...

THIS
COULD
BE
INTER-
ESTING.

STILL...

I'LL
HELP.

FWEE

I MADE
THIS, TOO!

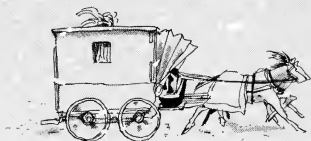
SECURITY LOOKS
MINIMAL, BUT HER
PRIVATE GUARDS
ARE ALWAYS
HIDDEN
SOMEWHERE
NEARBY.

HMM.

SOUNDS
OMINOUS.

THE
SNOW
DEEPENS.

RATTLE RATTLE



MM.
AND
SO
COLD.



STOP!
CAN'T
YOU
HEAR!?



TURN
THE
CAR-
RIAGE
AROUND.

TO THE
PURPLE
PALACE.
THIS
IS NOT
THE
WAY--



STOP.

WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?

WHAT IS THIS?

**RATTLE
RATTLE**



DM DM



DM



DM

THE
GUARDS!

THERE





FROM
THE
PRIEST...

IN THE
MOCHI...



TAKU-
MI...

SARA-
SA'S
LATE.



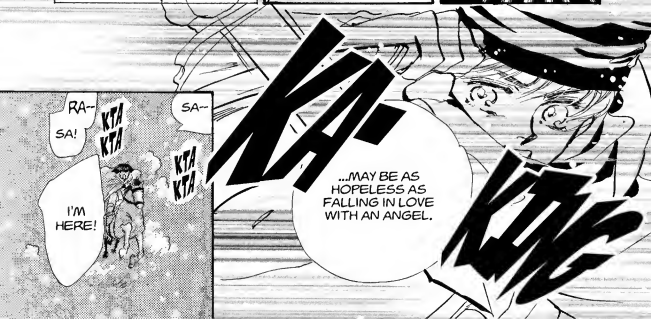
FALLING
IN LOVE
WITH
THAT
GIRL...



WHY!?

WHY DID
HE SEND
THIS?

A
DAGGER!



...MAY BE AS
HOPELESS AS
FALLING IN LOVE
WITH AN ANGEL.



RA--
SA!

SA--

KTA
KTA

KTA
KTA

I'M
HERE!



AMI
LATE?



FROM
KIKUNE
OF THE
FOUR
VIRTUES!

HEH!
HERE'S
THE
LATEST
INVEN-
TION--



PURPLE PALACE

BUT THIS
IS THE
SERVICE
ENTRANCE!

RATTLE RATTLE
LADY
PURPLE
IS BACK!

BMP

SKINSH
NOW...
ON TO THE
NEXT
PROBLEM...

UH...
YES,
MISS...

RATTLE

RATTLE

THE LADY
ISN'T
FEELING
WELL.
LET
US
THROUGH.

IT
FINALLY
DID
COME IN
HANDY...

TAKA
TAKA

TAKA

LADY
PUR-
PLE...?

I
DIDN'T
KNOW
SHE'D-

SHE'S
TIRED, SO
SHE'S
GOING TO
REST.

Kikune doesn't like her freckles.



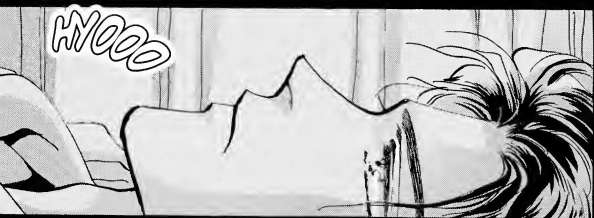
They show unless she wears makeup.

It's a popular brand among the dignitaries in Kyoto, but she'd really prefer to go without makeup at all.

TAMU









PLANNING
TO MAKE
A RUN
FOR IT...





NG...

GUH.

WHK



SURELY...

YOU DIDN'T
REALLY
BELIEVE I'D
SAVED YOU...

SHURI.

RED
KING.

...OUT
OF THE
KIND-
NESS
OF MY
HEART?



AMBER TALE 4: BEAST



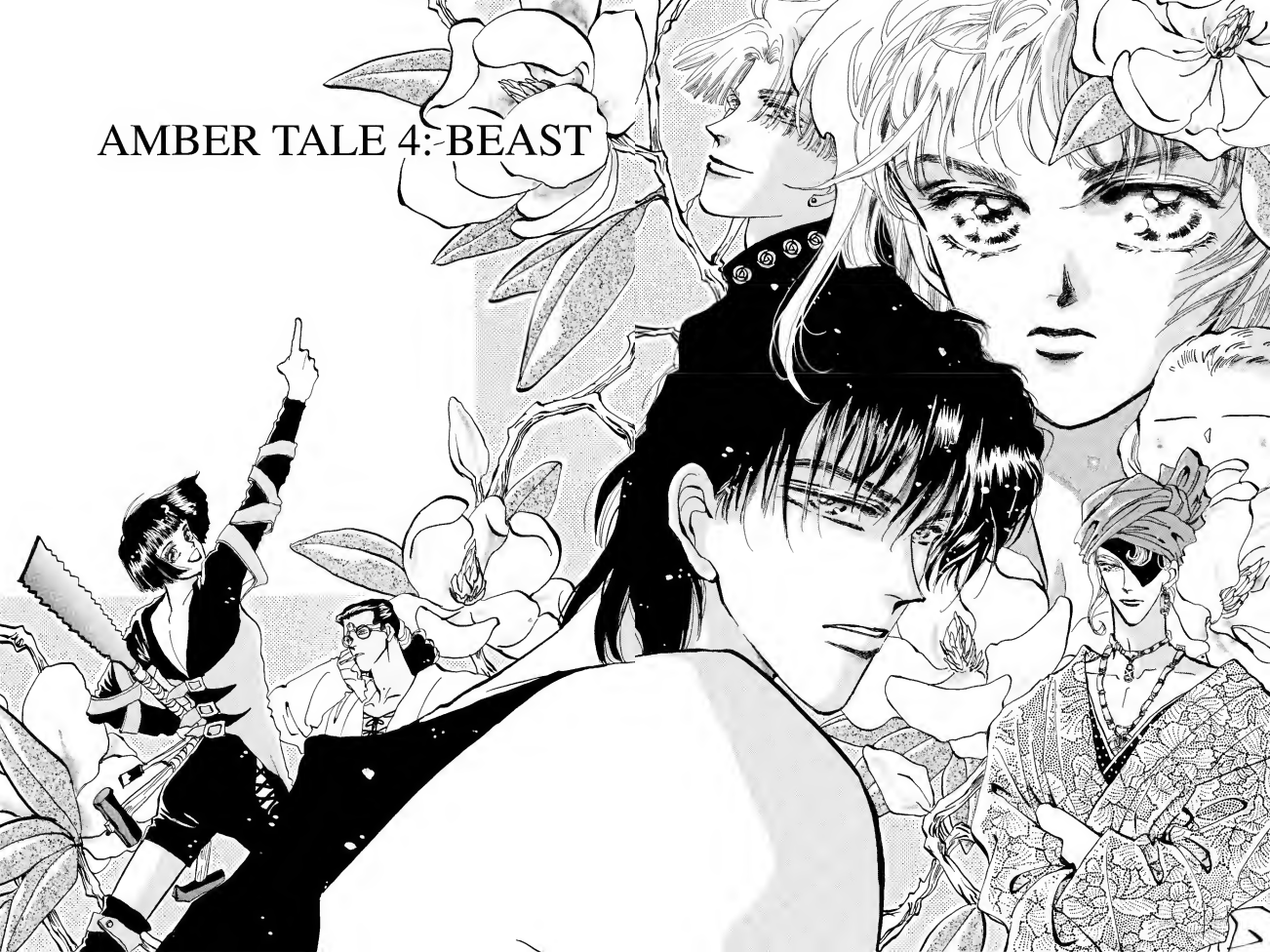
DO YOU WANT
TO KNOW
WHAT'S GOING
TO HAPPEN TO
YOU?

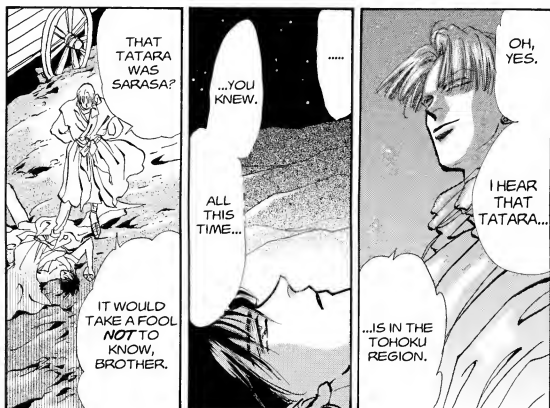
YOU'RE GOING
TO BE SOLD
TO A SLAVE
MERCHANT.

I HOPE YOU
ENJOY THE
HUMBLE
LIFE...

SHURI.

AMBER TALE 4: BEAST





TINY TAM-TAM TIME ②

TAM-TAM
Q&A:

How do you really pronounce
"BASARA" and "Ageha"?

Everyone puts the stress on a different syllable! ? (I wonder how "Basara" is pronounced in its native language?)

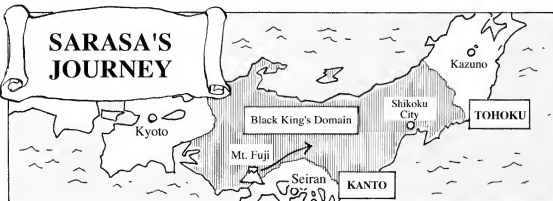
When I'm talking in my Kansai accent
(which is most of the time) I say: BASARA

...but when I'm being more self-conscious,
it might be: BAsara ...or even ba SARA
...so pick whatever you like.

I pronounce the other name Ageha.
[Emphasis on the first syllable-PD]
(But it doesn't really matter.)

TAMU

SARASA'S JOURNEY





DON'T...
YOU...

...LAY A
FINGER ON
SARASA.



I
TOLD
YOU...

I WOULD TAKE
WHATEVER
WAS MOST
PRECIOUS TO
YOU.

BUT I COULDN'T,
BECAUSE I WAS TOO
NICE.



YES,
SHURI, I
HATE
YOU.

IT'S
ABOUT
TIME YOU
ASKED.

I'VE
ALWAYS
HATED
YOU.



ASAGI...
WHAT DID I
EVER DO...

...TO
EARN THIS
HATRED?



YOU'RE
STILL IN
LOVE
WITH
HER?

IN
LOVE WITH
TATARA?

OH!

DON'T
TELL
ME--







FOR ONCE,
WHY CAN'T
YOU **CRY**
AND **BEG**
FOR YOUR
LIFE!?

YOU
MAKE ME
SICK!

ALWAYS
SO
CALM!



BUT JUST
REMEMBER...

YOU'VE
ALWAYS
GOT THE
SUN AT
YOUR
BACK...



SHADOWS!

...PEOPLE
LIKE **THAT**
ALWAYS
CAST...



I
HAVE
NO-
THING.

YOU'RE
RIGHT.

LORD
ASAGI...

HFF
HFF

WHY
CAN'T
YOU
GIVE IT
UP!?

WHY!?

YOU'RE A
KING NO
LONGER!

YOUR
PRIDE IS
WORTHLESS!



...PRIDE IN
BEING
MYSELF.

NOT
EVEN...



THANK
YOU FOR
SAVING
MY LIFE.



STILL, I'M
GLAD THAT I
WAS
STOPPED
BEFORE...

...I
COULD
KILL
MYSELF.





THAT'S NOT
WHAT I WANT!

SHEDDING
TEARS AT
ME?

WHAT'S
THIS!?

HA!



YOUR
ETERNAL
TOR-
MENT...

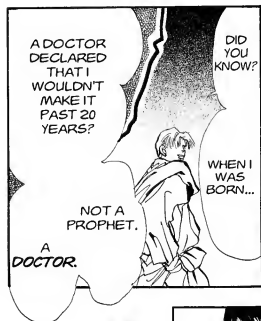
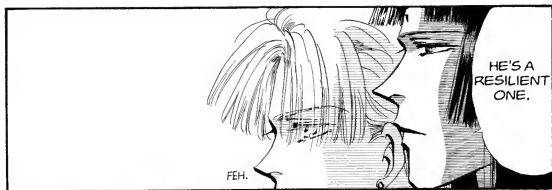
...IS
MY
JOY!

YOU
MAKE ME
SICK!

I'LL
SHOVE
YOU...

AGAIN
AND
AGAIN!

...INTO
THE
DEPTHS
OF
HELL!



HOOO

IT'S PROBABLY
SNOWING
THERE.



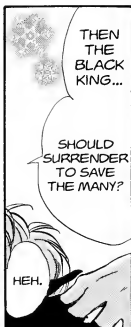
IF KAZUNO
LAUNCHES AN
ALL-OUT
OFFENSIVE...

YOU
HEARD
ME.

IT WILL MEAN
WAR ON AN
UNPRECE-
DENTED
SCALE.

DID I
HEAR
COR-
RECTLY?

IT SOUNDED
AS THOUGH
YOU SAID
"SURRENDER."





THEY WILL
ALL BE
JAPANESE.

...WILL
ALL BE
EQUAL.



DON'T
YOU
THINK...

...WAR IS
UNNECES-
SARY FOR
OUR
FUTURES?



IN THE
WEST...

...THERE
WERE
PEOPLE
WHO KEPT
FIGHTING BY
REFUSING
TO TAKE UP
THE
SWORD.



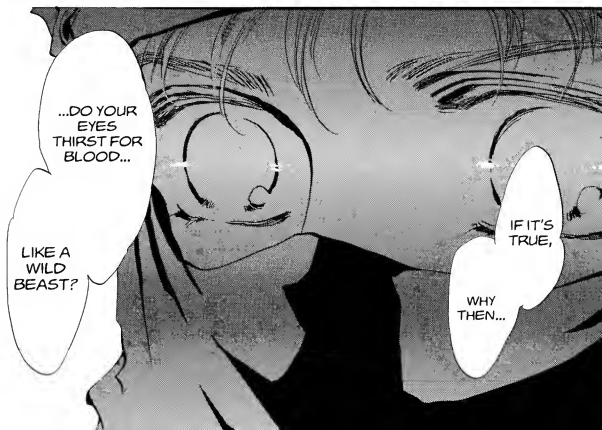
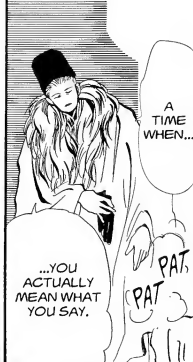
I
DO.

IN THE SOUTH,
ONE LEADER
NEGOTIATED
WITH HIS FOES
TO PROTECT
HIS COUNTRY.



SO...

YOU WANT
ME TO
BARGAIN
WITH THE
ENEMY?



VERTICAL TAM-TAM TIME ③

KIKUNE ON HER
FREE TIME.



She loves to draw blueprints,
carve wood and couple gears
all day.
But she usually ends up with
something strange that has no
imaginable application...

TAM.

NO NEED
TO SEE
ME OUT.

GOOD-
BYE.

I CAN
DRIVE A
CAR-
RIAGE.

WNOOO

BMP

ME...?

HOW...!?

THIRST FOR
BLOOD...!?

SAY.

I WAS
GOING
TO WRITE A
LETTER
TO AGEHA.

ANY MES-
SAGE
FOR HIM?

IF
YOU'RE
GOING
TO USE
MY
HIDEOUT,
DO I AT
LEAST GET
AN INTER-
VIEW?

OH, AND
SO ARE
YOU,
TATARA.

SHE'S A
BRAVE
WOMAN.

TARO! TARO!





THE TIGER
THAT
POUNCES
ON THE
BLACK
ARMY?

THE WHITE
TIGER AND
THE
NIGHT-
INGALE.

OH...

I'VE
ALWAYS
WANTED
TO ASK.



IS
THAT
YOU?

ONE OF
THEM IS
YOU, ISN'T
IT?



NO?

I HAVEN'T
GONE TO ANY
BATTLEFIELD.

I'M NOT
THE
WHITE
TIGER.

NO.

SHINBASHI,
GET IN HERE.

I'M
NOT.



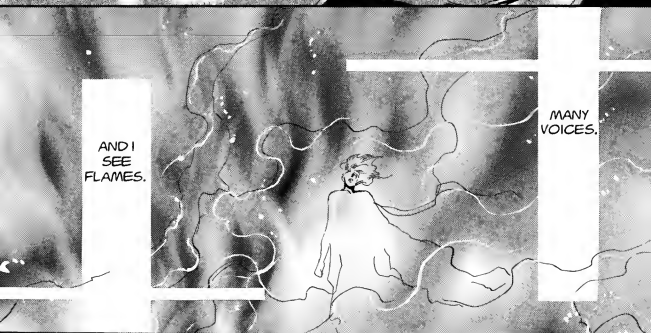
I'M NOT A
WILD
BEAST!

I DON'T
WANT
BLOOD.



I HEAR
VOICES.

BUT
SOMETIMES...



AND I
SEE
FLAMES.

MANY
VOICES.



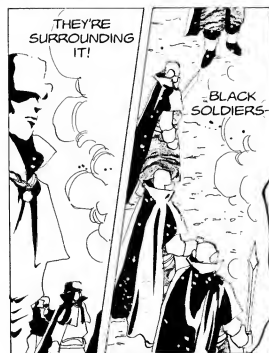
HEY,
WHAT'S
THAT?

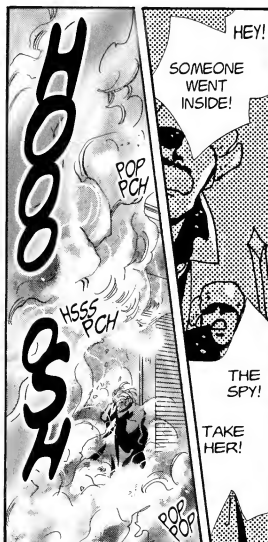
WIND.
TOO...

SNOW'S LETTING UP...



FLAMES...







SEE...

SARASA?

THIS IS WHAT
HAPPENS...

...WHEN
YOU
ARE
TOO
SOFT.

...A
VOICE.

I
HEAR...



M...

WON'T
YOU
AVENGE
US?

AH...

YOU
MUST
HATE.

AH...

YOU
MUST
BURN.

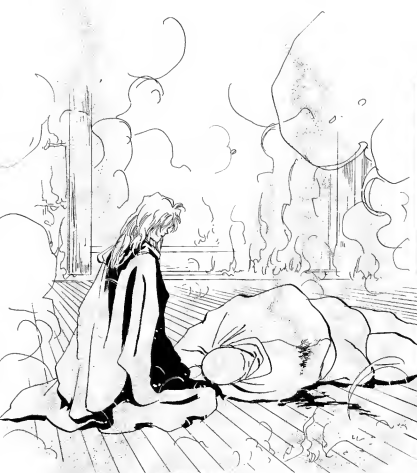
MAKE
THEM
PAY?

SARASA.

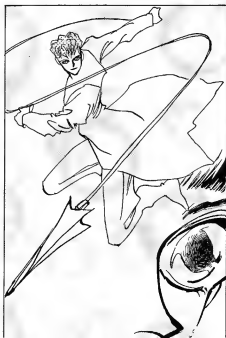
WHY
DO
YOU
BETRAY
US?

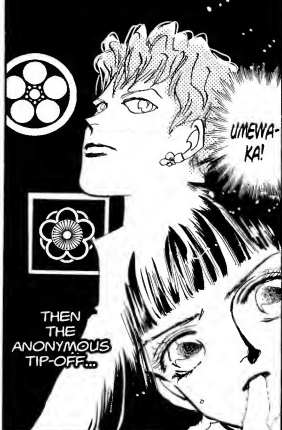
SARASA?

MOM...











THE
TIGER--

WE
MUST
KILL IT!

KEEP
FIGHT-
ING!



GET THE
ARCHERS!

REINFORCE-
MENTS!

IT'S
JUST
ONE
TIGER!

GUH

NAA



...WHEN
SHE'S
WEARING
A
BLACK
CLOAK?



WHY...

...WOULD
SHE
APPEAR
WHITE...

KOF

HM.

TAKE
A
LOOK.

WHAT'S
HAPPENED
TO
SARASA!?

WHO
THE
HELL
ARE
YOU!?

WHO
ARE
YOU!?

SO SHE
WAS THE
WHITE
TIGER...

HUH!?

SHE'S
DOING
THIS...
UNCON-
SCIOUSLY.

SO
VERY...

STRONG.

BUT
LOOK
HOW
STRONG
SHE
IS.

HOW
CAN
THAT
BE!?

SHE
WASN'T
AWARE
OF IT AT
ALL.

JUST LIKE
WHEN SHE
KILLED THE
BANDITS ON
MT. FUJI.

WAA

GAA

BUT THIS IS
TATARA'S
TRUE
NATURE.

SHE
WEAKENS
HERSELF BY
WORRYING
AND
WAVERING.

THIS IS WHAT
IT MEANS TO
BE THE CHILD
OF DESTINY.



HAVE
YOU
EVER--

HEARD OF
A TIGER
THAT
CRIES!?

NO!

THAT'S
NOT IT
AT ALL!

HUH?

ARE
YOU
BLIND!?

SHE MAY
SAY SHE
HATES WAR
AND WANTS
PEACE...

BUT
SHE
CAN'T
JUST
BANISH
THE RAGE.

SHE
HATES
AUTHOR-
ITY.

SHE HATES
THE ROYAL
FAMILY
FOR
KILLING
HER
FAMILY.

NO.

WHAT?!



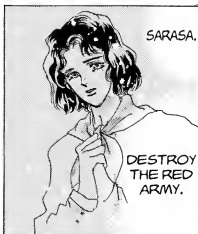
CRIES...!?



SARASA.

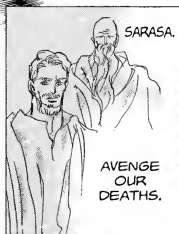
...IN MY
PLACE.

YOU
HAVE
TO
FIGHT...



SARASA.

DESTROY
THE RED
ARMY.



SARASA.

AVENGE
OUR
DEATHS.



FORGIVE
ME,
TATARA.

FORGIVE
ME,
MOTHER.

FORGIVE
ME,
FATHER.



I
WILL
KEEP
FIGHTING.

I
WILL
FIGHT.



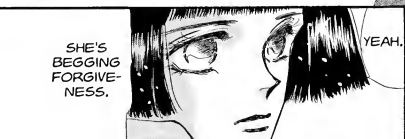
...LOVE
THE
RED
KING.

I
WILL
NEVER...



APOLO-
GIZING?

WHO'S
SHE
APOLOGIZING
TO?



SHE'S
BEGGING
FORGIVE-
NESS.

YEAH.



I GUESS
IT'S THE
GUILT SHE
FEELS.

SHE GOT
TOO CLOSE
TO THE
ENEMY.



YOU
HAVEN'T
GOTTEN
OVER IT.

THIS
ISN'T
GOOD.

YOU
HAVEN'T
SNAPPED
OUT OF
ANYTHING,
SARASA.

...PLEASE
FORGIVE
ME.



I'LL
NEVER
LOVE
HIM.

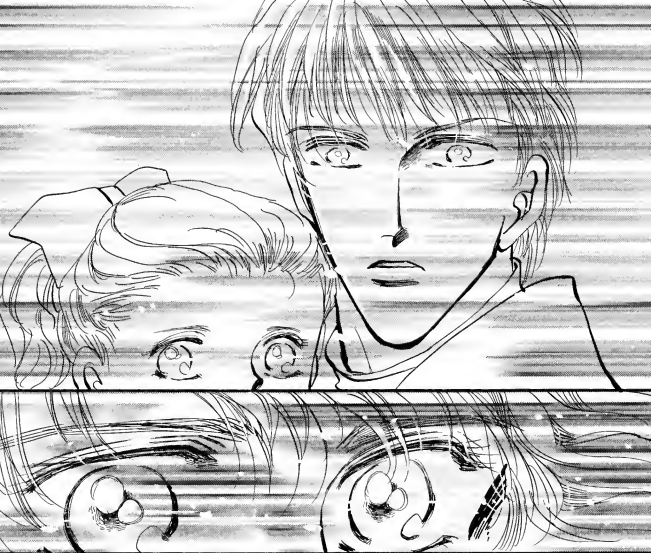
SO
PLEASE...

I'LL
KEEP
HATING...

I'LL
KEEP
FIGHTING...

SO
FORGIVE
ME,
MOTHER.







GO!

KTA
KTA

KTA

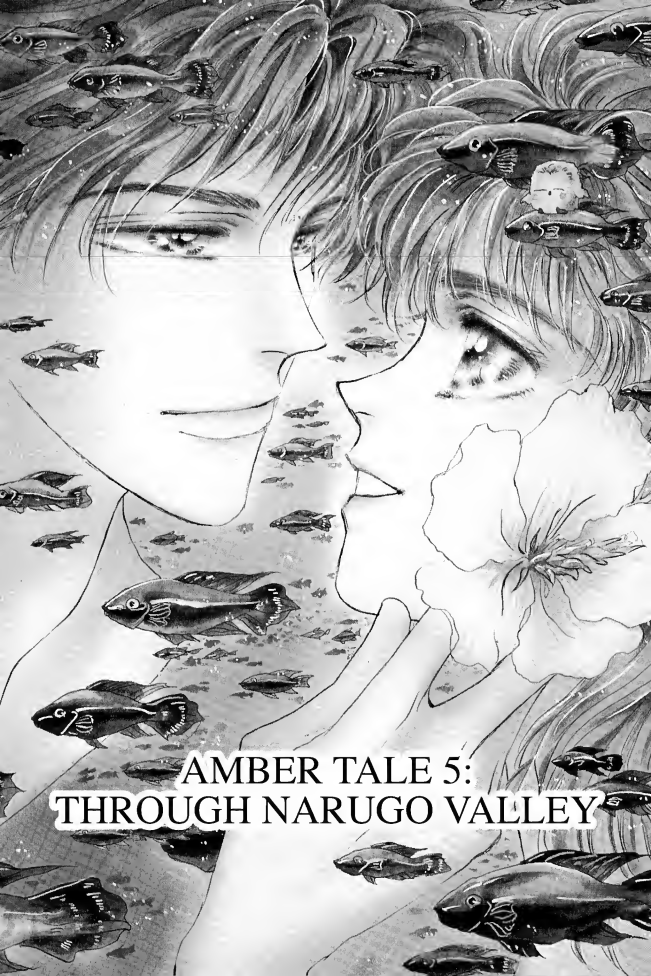
GET
THEM!

WHAT!?

SHE HAS
MORE
ALLIES!?



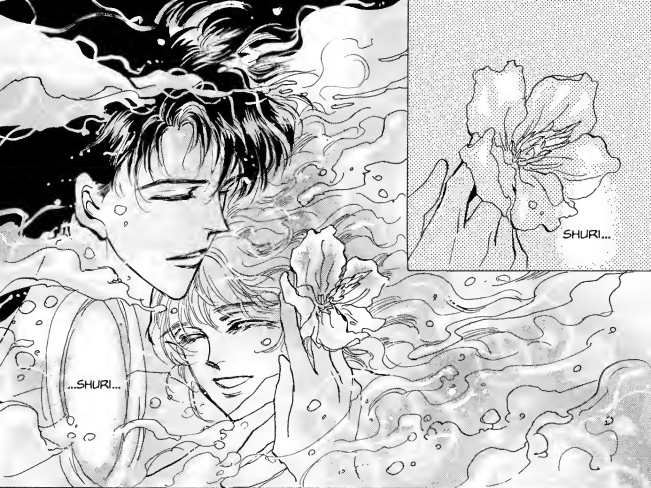




AMBER TALE 5:
THROUGH NARUGO VALLEY

SHURI...





TINY TAM-TAM TIME ③ They used to look like this back in the day.

MISCONCEPTIONS I HAD: ①

Hood dryers in beauty salons:

When I was little, I thought that was the thing that gave women their perms, with an electric charge or something.



I thought, "What a weird device!"

They have lots of different models

I ALSO THOUGHT "BEER PRETZ" WERE BEER-FLAVORED.

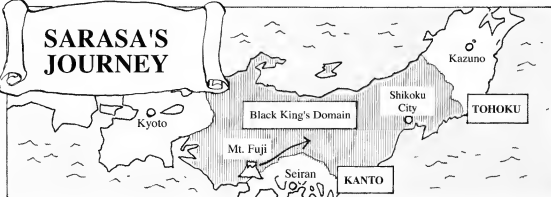


...at first. → I was indignant.

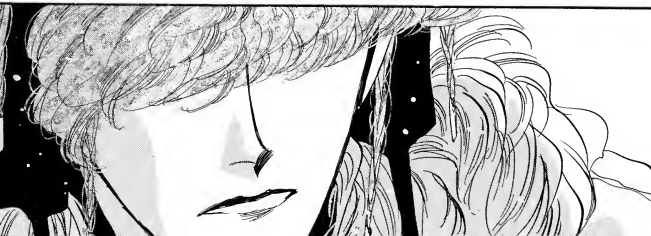
I like 'em now.

TAMU

SARASA'S JOURNEY

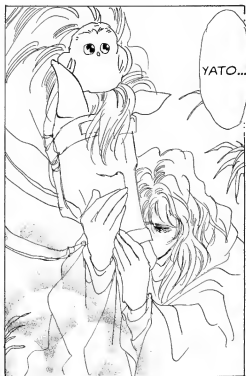








HOO?





ALL IN A HAZE...

IT'S
AS IF I
WAS
WATCHING
MYSELF...

FROM A
DISTANCE.



YOUR EYES
THIRST FOR
BLOOD
LIKE A WILD
BEAST.

YOU KEEP
QUIET!

BYAKKO!?

YIH-Y?

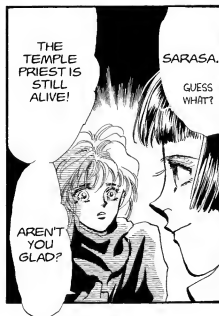
ME?

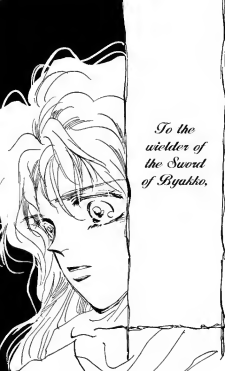
BAP

SO YOU
WERE
BYAKKO
AFTER
ALL!

YOU
WERE
SUPER-
HUMAN.

I'M
IMPRESSED,
TATARA.





*To the
wielder of
the Sword
of Byakko,*



HE
LEFT
A NOTE!

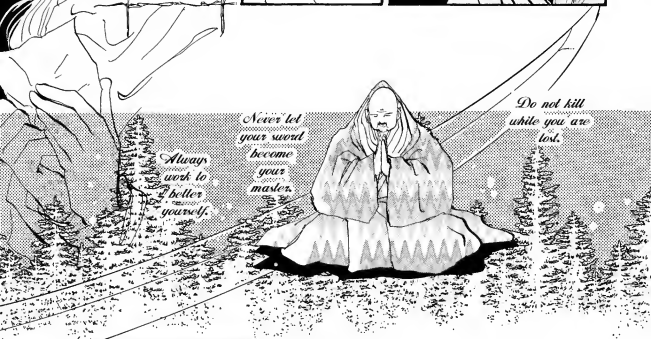
READ
IT!

IN YOUR
SWORD
SCAB-
BARD!



HE
WAS
HURT--

BUT
HE'LL BE
FINE!



*Always
work to
be better
yourself.*

*Never let
your sword
become
your
master.*

*Do not kill
while you are
lost.*



...YET HE
LET ME
STAY
WITH
HIM.

HE
KNEW...

YOUR
EMIN-
ENCE...

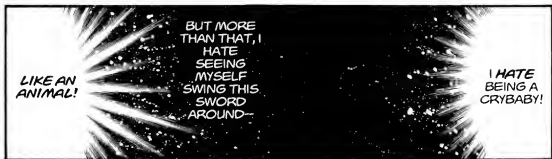
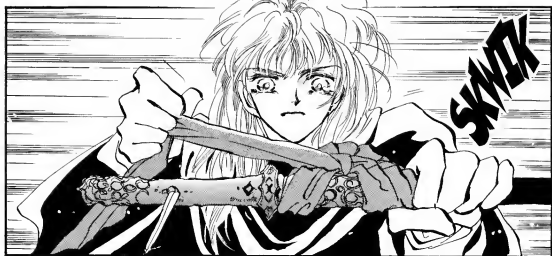


HE MUST'VE
KNOWN
WHAT YOU
WERE UP
TO.

AND THAT YOU
WERE REALLY
BYAKKO.

THE
MAKERS
OF THE
FOUR
SWORDS...

WERE
CRAFTSMEN
IN THIS
REGION.





...ON
THIS
SWORD.

I'LL
OBEY
YOU.

I'LL
PUT
A
SEAL...

AND WILL
YOU TAKE ME
WITH YOU?



WHAT'LL
WE DO
NOW?

HMM.
I
GUESS...

WE'LL
HAVE TO
HIDE IN
KAZUNO
FOR THE
TIME
BEING.



I'M SORRY
I MADE
YOU
WORRY.
I'M SUCH A
BURDEN!

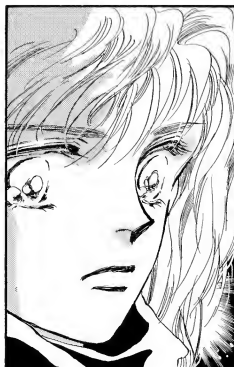
NAH.

IT'S
OKAY.



SARA-
SA...





YOU,
GIRL...

I WANT TO
SEE YOUR
TRUE
NATURE.



I SHALL
BRING
ONE OF
MY
RETAIN-
ERS.

MM.
HIS
NAME
IS
ICHI.

ICHI.

YES.
PREPARE
US FOR
THE
JOURNEY.



VERY
WELL.

SHALL
WE
GO?



THROUGH
NARUGO
VALLEY.



AND
YOU.
YOU
KNOW
THE
WAY,
YES?

TO SLIP
INTO
KAZUNO
UNSEEN?





...SEEMED SO SWEET.
I THOUGHT
WE'D BE HAPPY
TOGETHER.

SHE...

AND I
THOUGHT
IT WAS
TRUE
LOVE...



I
CAN'T
BELIEVE
SHE
WAS A
SPY...

SHE
PLAYED
ME FOR A
FOOL.

THEN...

SHE
TRICKED
ME.



BUT YOU
SOUND
REALLY
PATHETIC.

HEY.

I DON'T
KNOW
YOUR
STORY...

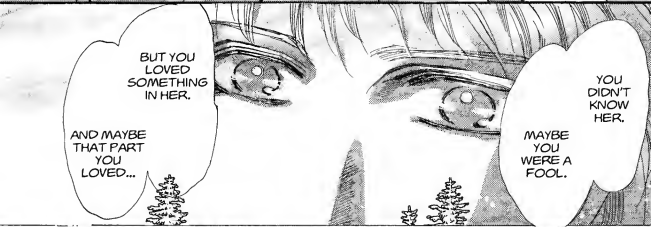


HOW DARE A
SLAVE TALK LIKE
THAT!?

WHAT
DID YOU
SAY!?



MAYBE MOST
OF IT WAS
LIES.



BUT YOU
LOVED
SOMETHING
IN HER.

AND MAYBE
THAT PART
YOU
LOVED...

YOU
DIDN'T
KNOW
HER.

MAYBE
YOU
WERE A
FOOL.



...WAS
REAL.



THE
SNOW...

IS
GETTING
DEEPER.





...IS TESTING ME...



LADY PURPLE...



SUCH A POINT-LESS WAR.

DON'T YOU THINK...

MISS BYAKKO?



...BECOME BYAKKO AGAIN!

SNK

I'LL NEVER...



A VERY STRANGE GIRL.

TATARA.



THE BLACK KING'S WIFE.

HER ATTENDANT.



...THIS GAGGLE WE'VE ENDED UP WITH.

NOT EXACTLY INCONSPICUOUS.

SHOW, AGAIN.

LAST TIME WAS SO SAD!

QUITE ODD...

KRAK

KACH



...BUT
WHO...?



AND TARO, THE
JOURNALIST.

ALL OF
US...
HEADING
NORTH.



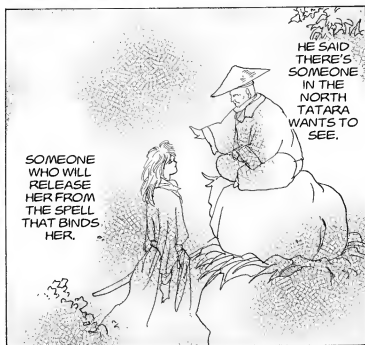
A MAN
FROM
KAZUNO,
JUST AS
STRANGE...

CHANGING TO
SNOWSHOES.



THE
OLD MAN...

...IN THE
FORESTS
OF MT.
FUJI...



HE SAID
THERE'S
SOMEONE
IN THE
NORTH
TATARA
WANTS TO
SEE.

SOMEONE
WHO WILL
RELEASE
HER FROM
THE SPELL
THAT BINDS
HER.

...IN THE
NORTH...

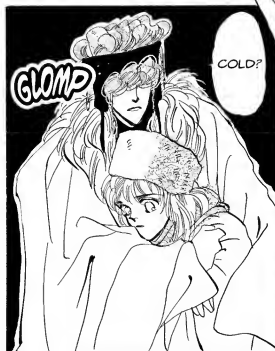
SOMEONE
WAITS FOR
TATARA...





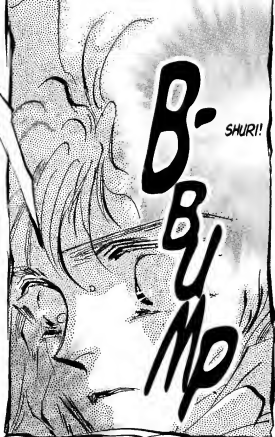
HOT
SPRINGS.





GLOMP

COLD?



SHURI!

B-BUMP



SARASA!
SARASA!

NO...

REALLY.

UH?
NO!



...DEAR
GOD...

KUNK



RATTLE

PLEASE...

LET US
THROUGH...



THERE.

THE
CHECK-
POINT.



SHH!

SHH!



I DON'T
TRUST
THIS
GUY.

STEER
CLEAR
OF HIM.

PSST





SARA--

ARE TO
STOP
ANYONE
SUSPICIOUS!



OUR
ORDERS--



THEY SAY
BYAKKO
IS
COMING!

MAYBE
IT'S YOU,
HUH?

WITNESSES
DESCRIBE
SOMEONE
YOUR AGE
AND SIZE.





THEN
TATARA'S
A FOOL.

IF SHE
ACTS UP
NOW...

THEY
HAVEN'T
FOUND
ANY-
THING.

THEY'RE
JUST
PLAYING
WITH US.



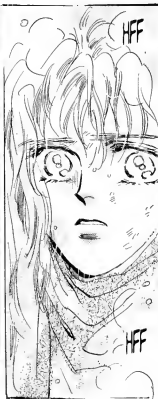
I
WOULDN'T
USE IT!

PROMISED...



A
WILD
BEAST!

I
AM
NOT--





HA
HA
HA

IF HER
FORCES
WERE
HERE...

THIS
IS
GREAT!

BARK
AGAIN!

S
A
R
A
S
A
!

THEY'D
NEVER
HAVE
GOTTEN
AWAY
WITH
THIS.

FOR-
CES?



HEY.

THE
PRISONER
THEY TOLD
US ABOUT.

KLIP
KLOP

WA
HA
HA

NOT
EXACTLY
BYAKKO'S
TYPE!



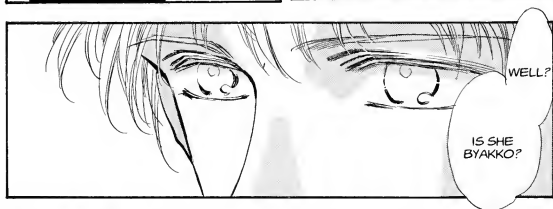
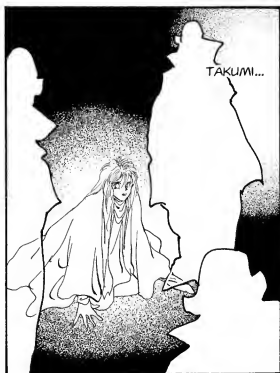
THEY
SAY HE
KNOWS
BYAKKO
PERSON-
ALLY.

THEY'RE
BRINGING HIM
TO DIFFERENT
CHECKPOINTS
TO IDENTIFY
SUSPECTS.



THAT
GIRL IS
TATARA.

THE
LEGENDARY
CHILD OF
DESTINY.



BUT YOU
LOVED...

MAYBE MOST
OF IT WAS
LIES.

...YOU
LOVED...

...WAS
REAL.

TAKUMI!

...SOME-
THING
IN HER.

MAYBE
THE
PART...

DON'T
GO!

A
BATTLE-
FIELD IS
A PLACE
WHERE
YOU GO
TO DIE.

NO.

IS SHE
BYAKKO
OR
NOT?

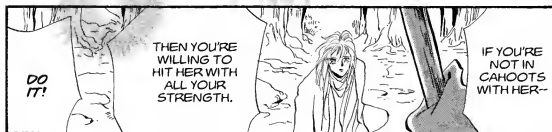
WELL,
WHAT
DO YOU
SAY?



YOU TOOK
A LONG
TIME
DECIDING!

SHE'S
NOT!?

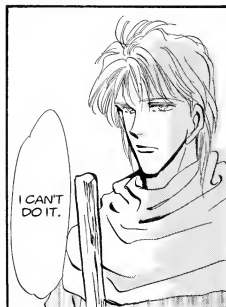
TAKE
THIS
STICK.



DO
IT!

THEN YOU'RE
WILLING TO
HIT HER WITH
ALL YOUR
STRENGTH.

IF YOU'RE
NOT IN
CAHOOTS
WITH HER--



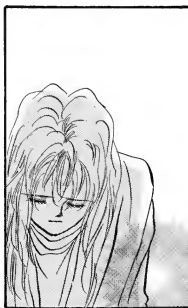
I CAN'T
DO IT.



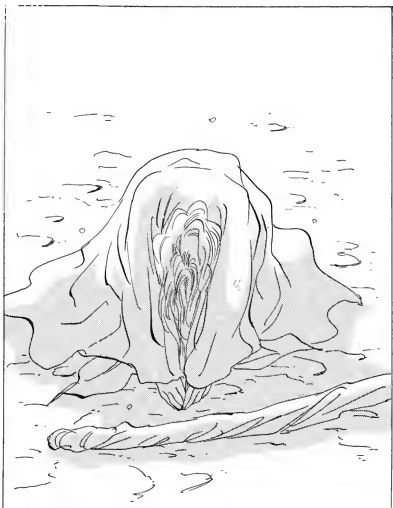
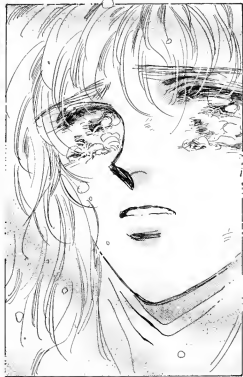
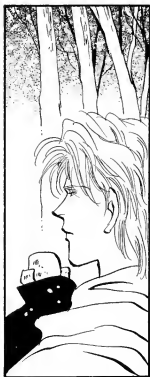
WHAT'S
WRONG?
DON'T
WANNA?

WHY?
SHE YOUR
FRIEND?

CAN'T SEE!



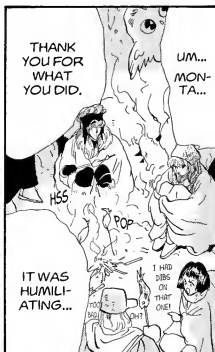








...WHAT
THEY
MADE
YOU
DO...



THANK
YOU FOR
WHAT
YOU DID.

UM...
MON-
TA...

IT WAS
HUMILI-
ATING...



I ALWAYS
THOUGHT...

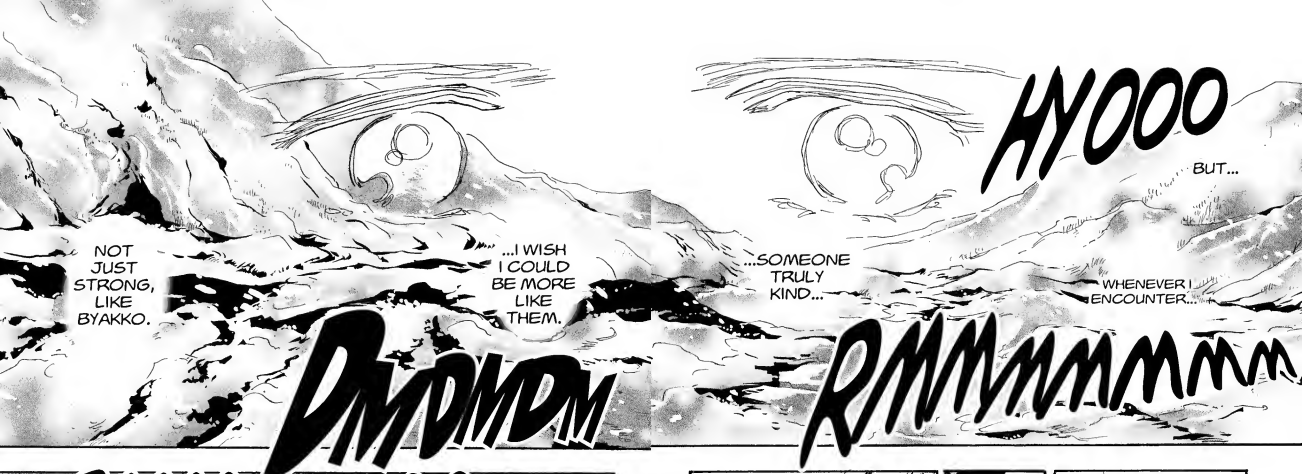
...I NEEDED TO
BE STRONGER.



EVEN AFTER
ALL HE'S
BEEN
THROUGH...



THAT
WAS SO
GREAT
WHAT
TAKUMI
DID.



NOT
JUST
STRONG,
LIKE
BYAKKO.

...I WISH
I COULD
BE MORE
LIKE
THEM.

...SOMEONE
TRULY
KIND...

WHENEVER I
ENCOUNTER...

HYOOO

BUT...

DMDMDM

RMMMMMMMM



RAAAA YAAAA

AAA



GYAAA
VSSHH
AAA



A
BATTLE!

WE MUST
KEEP
MOVING AND
NOT GET
ENTANGLED.

THE
SNOW'S
LETTING
UP

...SARA-
SA?

WE DID
NOT
COME
HERE TO
FIGHT.

NO,
ICHI!

IT'S A
BATTLE!

BATTLE!?

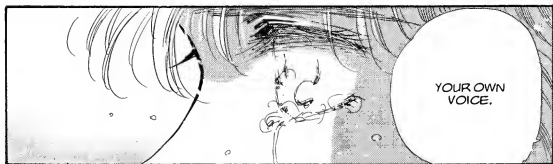
WHAT'S THAT
RUMBLING?
AN
AVALANCHE?

WHO'S IN
COM-
MAND!?

IT'S
CLOSE!

MAY I GO
JOIN
THEM, MY
LADY?







I'M
SCARED,
MOM!

WHAT IF I
CAN'T HATE
ANYMORE?

WHAT IF I
CAN'T FIGHT
ANYMORE?

MOM!

I DON'T
WANT TO
BE A
TRAITOR!



I HAVE
TO...

I HAVE
TO
FIGHT.

...DRAW
THE
SWORD.



...BECOME
BYAKKO!

I
HAVE
TO...



WOW!

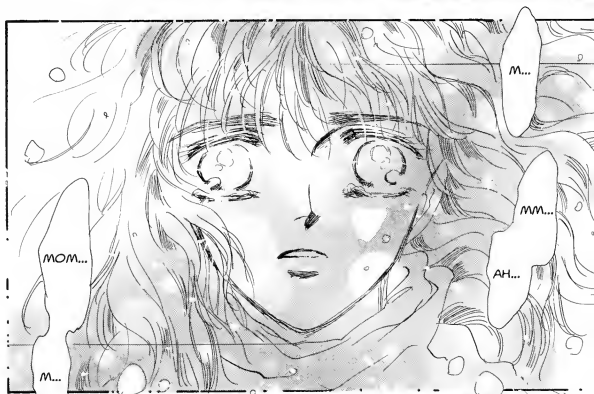
SHE
REALLY
DOES
EXIST!



IT'S THE
NIGHTINGALE!







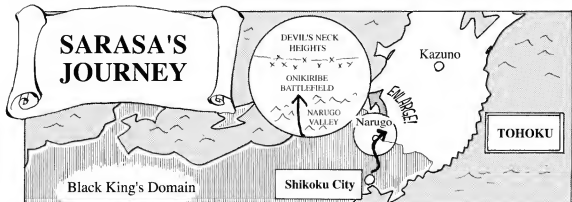
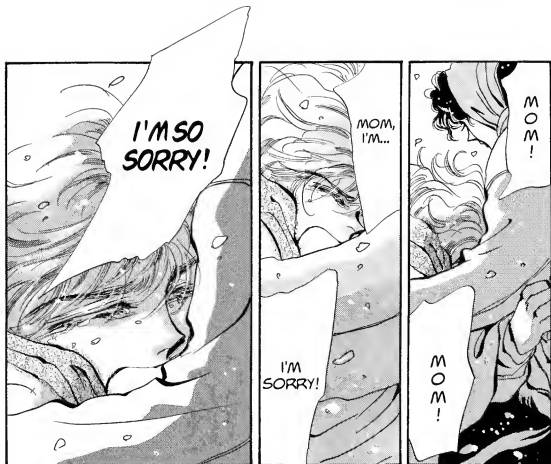


mom!



AMBER TALE 6: MOTHER









I'M
SORRY,
MOM!



I'M
SORRY!





PLEASE...

COULD
YOU
PLEASE...

HOLD
MY
HAND...?



M...

MISS
NIGHT-
INGALE...



EASY.

BREATHE,
SARASA.

BREATHE.

HFF

HFF



K...

KATORI...

SHIP

WHAT'S
YOUR
NAME?



HE'S
THE
ENE-
MY!

MOM!



MOM.

THIS
IS A
BLACK
SOLDIER.

PLEASE...
STOP!



IF I DON'T
MAKE IT
BACK,
THEY'LL...

MY
ELDERLY
PARENTS...

ARE
WAITING
FOR ME
BACK
HOME.

...BUT...
I WON'T
MAKE IT...
WILL I...?



A
TIME...

THAT WILL
BRING
COMFORT
TO
EVERYONE.

A NEW
ERA WILL
COME.



...GUIDE
YOU TO A
BETTER
PLACE.

MAY THE
LIGHT...

HAVE
NO
FEAR.

REST IN
PEACE,
KATORI.

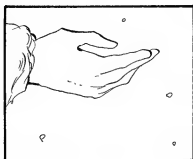


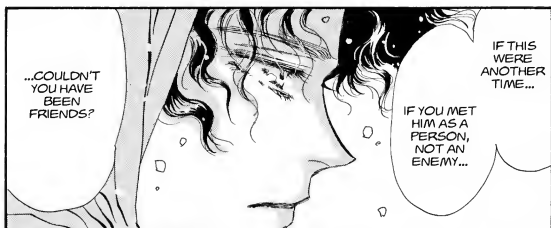
MOM...
HE'S A
BLACK
SOLDIER.

ARE THEY
ANY
DIFFERENT
FROM US,
SARASA?



R
A
A
A







A DECENT
MAN.

HE
WAS A
MAN.



DON'T
YOU
HATE
THEM
ALL!?

DON'T
YOU
HATE
HIM!?

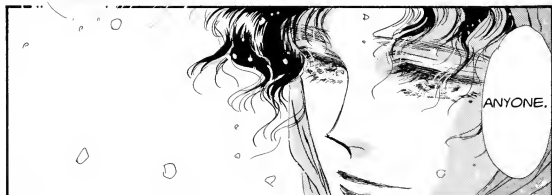
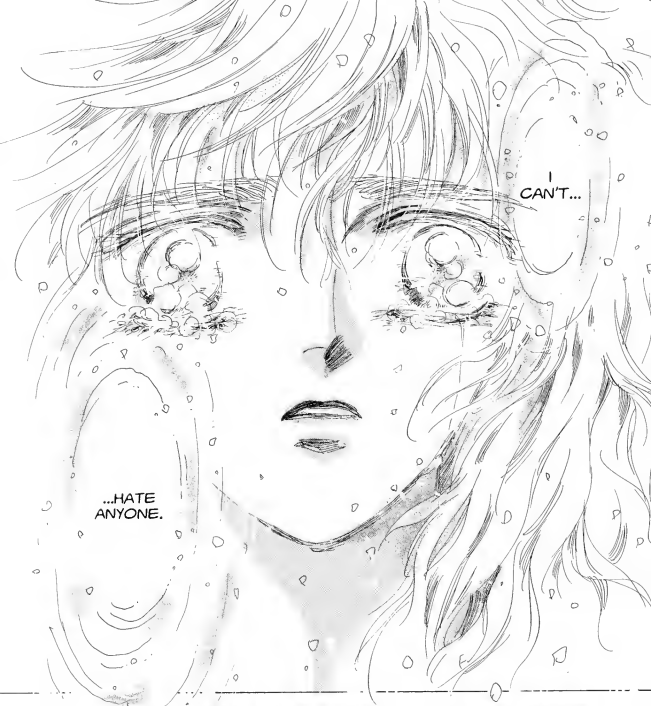
NO...
MOM...

SARASA.



I CAN'T
HATE
ANYONE
ANYMORE.

I CAN'T
DO IT...





NOT
EVEN...

THE
RED
KING...?



NOT
EVEN
THE
RED
KING.



SARASA,

TELL ME
WHY...

WHY MUST
YOU
REGRET
HAVING
LOVED
SOMEONE?



BUT...

I'M
AFRAID.

WHAT IF I
CAN NO
LONGER
HATE?





I...
HAVE
TO GO
HOME...



P...
...PLEASE...

HELP
ME...



A
BLACK
SOL-
DIER!



GRP



A LAND
WHERE
WE
NEVER...

...HAVE
TO
FEAR.



"WHY?"



...OF
HER...

...OF...



I HAVE
TO GO
HOME...

...MY
WIFE
WILL
BE...

...A...

...ALONE.
YOU...
REMINDE
ME...



I
JUST...
GOT
MARRIED.

SHE'S...

CARRYING
MY BABY.



TO
BUILD A
NEW
NATION.



WHERE
WE
CAN
LIVE...

AND
FREE.

JUST.

BOUNTIFUL.



...IN PEACE...



BYAKKO...



BYAKKO...







YES.

RATTLE

I WASN'T
HERE TO
HELP HER.



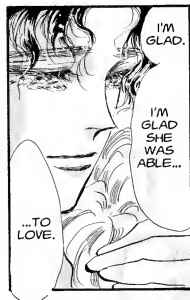
RATTLE

HAVE
YOU
BEEN
APART
FOR A
LONG
TIME?



MY
LITTLE
GIRL...
SUCH
PAIN...
AND
LOVE.

THEY
GROW
UP SO
FAST.



I'M
GLAD.

I'M
GLAD
SHE
WAS
ABLE...

...TO
LOVE.



I THOUGHT...
IN THESE
WRETCHED,
HARDENED
TIMES...

...YOU WOULD
GROW DEVOID
OF EMOTION,
AS PARCHED
AS THE SAND
WE WALK ON.



...BY
EVERYONE.



SHE'S
FORTU-
NATE...

WHAT YOU
THINK OF THIS
COUNTRY.

I WANT TO
KNOW
WHAT YOU
THINK OF
TATARA.

I
WANT TO
TALK TO
YOU.

SHURI.

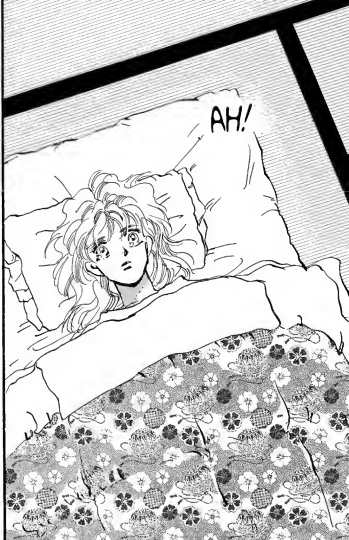
SHURI.

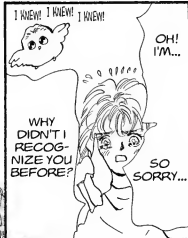
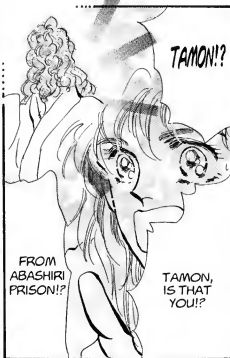
WE HAVE TO TALK.
EVEN IF THE RESULT...
IS THAT WE FIGHT EACH OTHER.

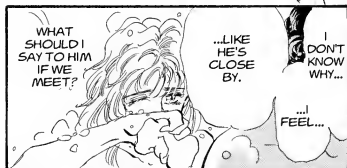
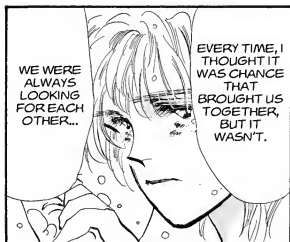
...ARE YOU?

WHERE...

NOT FAR...



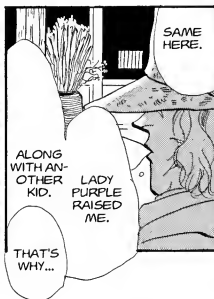




SHE MEANS
EVERYTHING
TO ME.

NOW
AND
FOR-
EVER...

NO
MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENS...







WEL-
COME.

I AM
MASUNAGA,
DEFENDER
OF THE
SOUTH.

ICHI-
MATSU
OF
HIDA!?

I AM LADY
PURPLE.
WIFE TO...

...THE
BLACK
KING.

THEY SAY
COLLECTING
SCARS IS
HIS HOBBY...

HE HAS
MORE
SCARS
EVERY
TIME
YOU
SEE
HIM...

UHP!

HOW
MANY
OF US
HAS HE
KILLED!?

ONE OF THE
BLACK
ARMY'S
"THREE
LANCES"!

THIS IS MY
RETAINER,
ICHIMATSU
OF HIDA.



SHE
LOOKS
SO MUCH
BETTER!

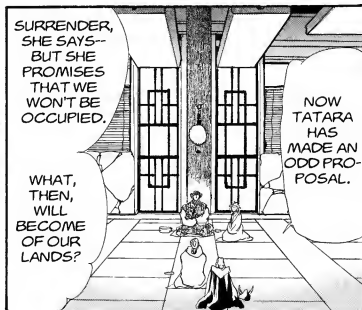
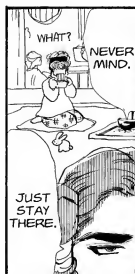
SARA-
SA!



AND I KEPT
INSULTING
HIM!

EESH!

HE'S A
BIG
SHOT!?



NOT
AS A
MONARCH.

OR AS
ANYONE'S
QUEEN.



YOU,
LADY
PURPLE...

WILL
OVER-
SEE THE
LANDS.



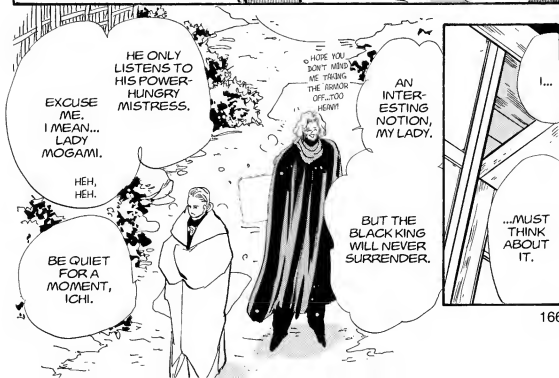
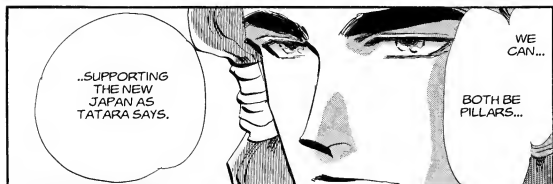
AS THE FIRST
REPRESENTA-
TIVE...

OF THE
PEOPLE OF
THIS NEW
NATION.

BUT
SIMPLY
AS THE
ADMINI-
STRATOR...

OF THE
NORTHEAST
REGION OF
JAPAN.





I WANTED
CHILDREN,
TOO.

I ENVY
YOU.

EVEN MY
HUSBAND'S
MISTRESS
HAD A
CHILD...

SHALL I
CHOOSE
MY
HUSBAND'S
HAPPINESS,
OR THE
PEOPLE'S?

HEH.

HAVE YOU
FINISHED
YOUR
TALKS?

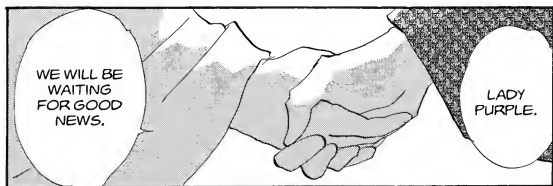
NOT AT
ALL.

...CAN BE
THE
MOTHER
OF A NEW
NATION...
...THE
FIRST
MOTHER
OF
JAPAN.

BUT...
MY DEAR...

...YOU...







IT
CAN'T
CUT.

THAT'S THE
WHOLE
POINT.

HUH?

BUT
THAT'S...

...A
BAMBOO
SWORD.

THIS.

...WAS
MADE AS
A
WARNING.

GENBU...



"NEVER LET THE
SWORD BE
YOUR MASTER."

WHAT
THE
AOBA
TEMPLE
PRIEST
SAID...

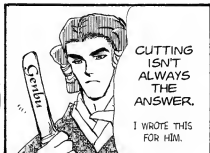


...STRIKE
HOME TO ME
NOW...

YOU'LL SEE
HIM AGAIN.

HE GOES FISHING
EVERYWHERE.

THOSE
WORDS...



CUTTING
ISN'T
ALWAYS
THE
ANSWER.

I WROTE THIS
FOR HIM.



IT'S
TIME...

...FOR ME
TO FACE
WHAT I
HAVE TO
DO, TOO.



THE
FOUR
FORCES
WILL
COME
TO-
GETHER!

WILL
THE
ROYAL
FAMILY
FALL...!?

JAPAN'S
POWER
STRUC-
TURE
WILL
SHIFT!



OH...!

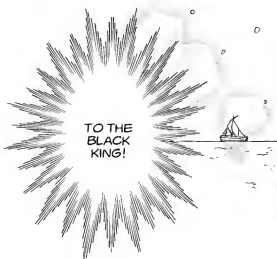
TATA-
RA!

SHE HAS
ASSEMBLED
ALL FOUR
TREASURED
SWORDS!



...BE
WATCHING
OVER YOU.

I WILL
ALWAYS...



TO THE
BLACK
KING!



TO
SHIKO-
KU!

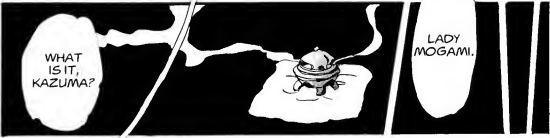


BYE,
MOMMY!

SEE
YOU
LATER!

I'M
OFF,
MOM!

RATTLE



WHAT
IS IT,
KAZUMA?

LADY
MOGAMI.



MM.

LADY PURPLE
SEEMS TO
BE PLOTTING
SOMETHING.



THAT
HAG HAS
BEEN
GETTING
ON MY
NERVES.

GET RID
OF HER.

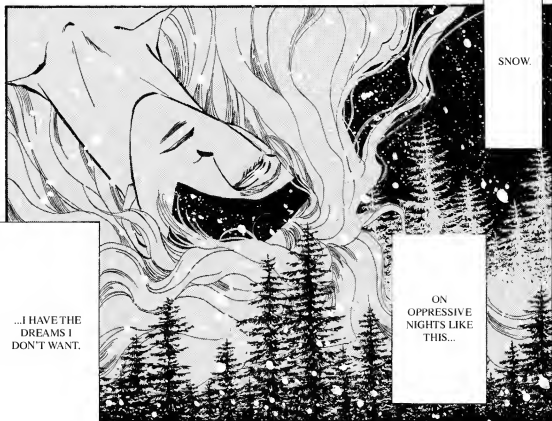
IT WAS I WHO
GAVE BIRTH TO
THE BLACK
KING'S HEIR.



BONUS STORY:

THE EVE OF THE ALLIANCE

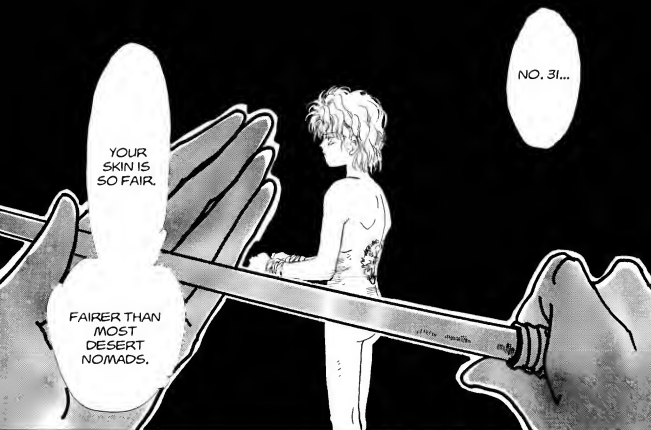
AGEHA IN KAZUNO



...I HAVE THE
DREAMS I
DON'T WANT.

SNOW.

ON
OPPRESSIVE
NIGHTS LIKE
THIS...



YOUR
SKIN IS
SO FAIR.

NO. 31...

FAIRER THAN
MOST
DESERT
NOMADS.



GROAN
OUT
LOUD.

MOAN.

CRAWL
AROUND
WITH YOUR
TAIL IN THE
AIR.



AH!

ZFF

IT'S
FLUSHED
TO A NICE
COLOR
NOW.



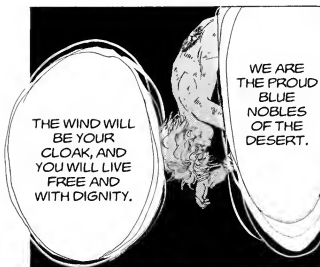
VIP

WSH WSH

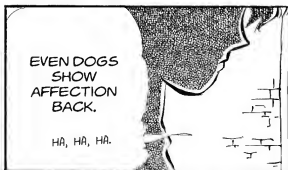
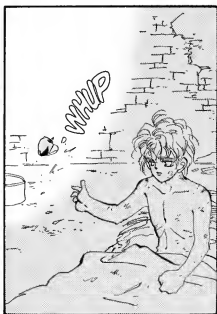
WHOO



SHHH







EVEN DOGS
SHOW
AFFECTION
BACK.

HA, HA, HA.



SEE?

COMPASSION
IS WASTED
ON THEM.



YOU
NEVER
CRY OR
SCREAM.

THAT ONLY
AROUSSES
ME ALL THE
MORE.

YOU'RE
TOO
STUPID TO
KNOW...



YOU
NEVER
TRY...

TO
CURRY
FAVORS.



YOU
ARE...

...ONE
OF THE
PROUD.



YOU CAN'T,
CAN YOU?

YOU'RE A
COWARD.
ALL
YOU'RE
GOOD
FOR...

..IS
THIS...



WHY
DON'T
YOU TRY
IT?

COME
ON.
TRY TO
KILL ME.



DO YOU
HATE
ME?

DO
YOU
WANT
TO
KILL
ME?



...OF THE
DESERT...

THE
PROUD
PEOPLE...

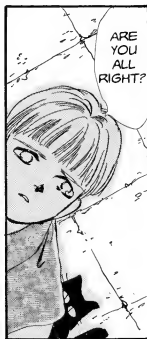


LOOK
AT
ME.

YOUR
WOUNDS
WILL GET
INFECTED
IF YOU
DON'T
TAKE
CARE OF
THEM.

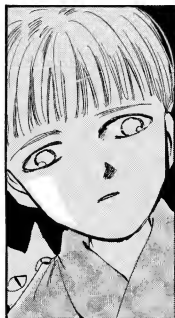


YOU
HAVE
A
FEVER...



ARE
YOU
ALL
RIGHT?

SHURI WAS STILL A BABY THEN.



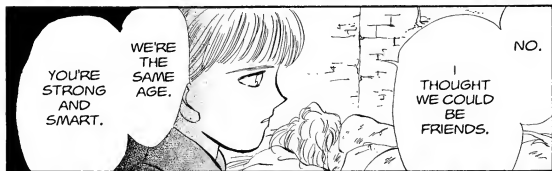
IS IT FUN
TO TAKE
PITY...

...ON
A
SLAVE?



...IS
IT
FUN?

HUH?



YOU'RE
STRONG
AND
SMART.

WE'RE
THE
SAME
AGE.

NO.

I
THOUGHT
WE COULD
BE
FRIENDS.



WHEN I
CREATE
THE NEW
ERA...

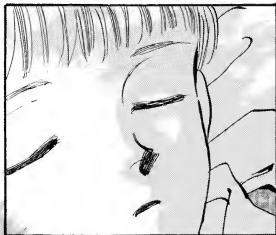
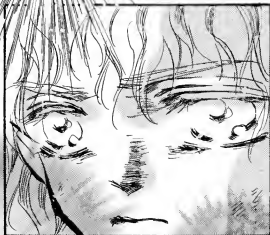
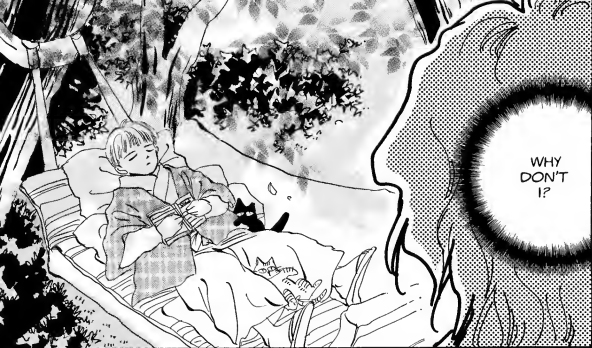
I WANT YOU...
BY MY SIDE.

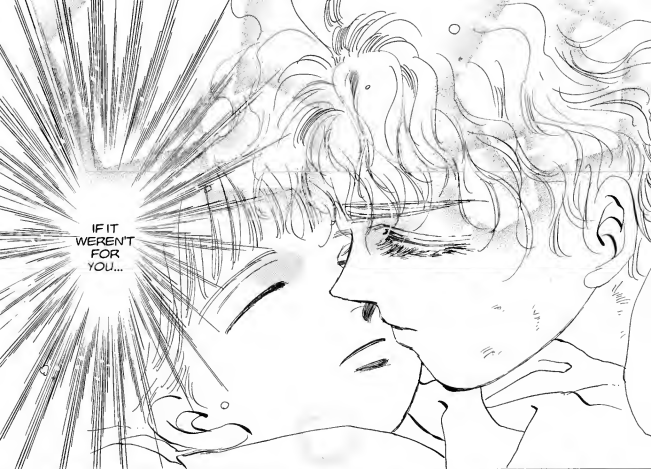
WON'T BE
LIKE MY
FATHER.

I...









IF IT
WEREN'T
FOR
YOU...



YOU
DISGUSTING
BEAST!

FILTHY
SLAVE!



THROW
HIM
AWAY IN
THE
DESERT!

I HOPE HE
SHRIVELS
AND DIES!

GET
RID OF
HIM!

ANI-
MAL!

IS *THIS*
HOW YOU
REPAY
KINDNESS?

SHIDO!

FATHER?

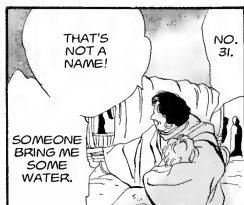
HE *DID*
THINGS
TO YOU!

WHAT'S
WRONG?



ARE YOU
ALL
RIGHT?
WHAT'S
YOUR
NAME?

HE'S
STILL
ALIVE.



THAT'S
NOT A
NAME!

NO.
31.

SOMEONE
BRING ME
SOME
WATER.



SO
CRUEL...
HE'S
JUST A
CHILD.



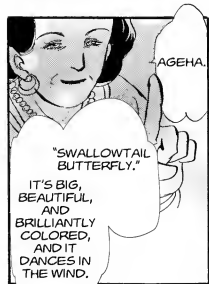
HE'S NOT A
TOY!

MONSHI-
RO!

MONKI!

OOO!

MADAM,
LOOK.
HE'S SO
PRETTY!



AGEHA.

"SWALLOWTAIL
BUTTERFLY."

IT'S BIG,
BEAUTIFUL,
AND
BRILLIANTLY
COLORED,
AND IT
DANCES IN
THE WIND.



I AM
MADAM
BUTTER-
FLY.

I WILL GIVE
YOU A NAME,
ONE I'VE
SAVED FOR
SOMEONE
ESPECIALLY
DESERVING.

...COME
WITH
ME?

WONT
YOU...

...THAT
DANCES IN
THE WIND.

A
BUTTERFLY...

AGEHA.

RAIZO...

YOU WERE
MOANING IN
YOUR SLEEP.
YOU ALL
RIGHT?

HEY,
AGEHA.

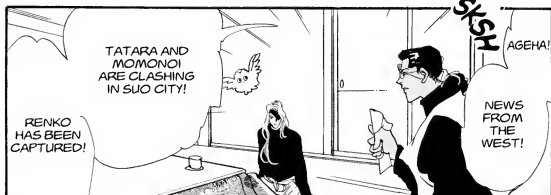
.....
WAS IT
A SAD
DREAM?

I
COULDN'T...

...GO
WITH
HIM.



I'M KAGERO.





THEN I
HAVE
SOME-
THING
FOR US
TO DO.



THEY STILL
RELY ON
SUPERSTITIONS
AND
OMENS.



THE OLD
FOLK
WON'T PUT
THEIR
FAITH IN
NEW
POWERS.

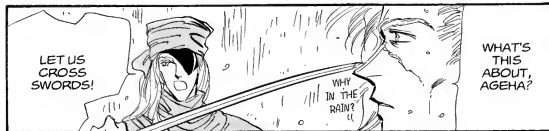


I AM
TATARA'S
PROXY.

AND LORD
MASUNAGA IS
FROM
KAZUNO!

MINISTERS
OF
KAZUNO!

ALLOW US TO
PROVE OUR
SINCERITY.



WHY
IN THE
RAIN?

WHAT'S
THIS
ABOUT,
AGEHA?







OH!

THE THREE
SWORDS
MELTED...

THE
SWORDS!

INTO
ONE!





MY FINGERS GOT SINGED...



THAT
COULD'VE
KILLED
YOU.

LIAR.

WAS HE ALWAYS LIKE THIS...?



...IS FINALLY
REALIZED?

WHAT WILL
YOU GAIN
WHEN YOUR
DREAM OF
A NEW
COUNTRY...



THANKS FOR
LETTING ME
STAY.

I'M
GOING
TO SUO,
THEN.

YOU
NEVER
STAY IN
ONE
PLACE
FOR
LONG, DO
YOU?



THE
MESSENGER
HAS LEFT.

KING UKON
WILL HEAR
OF THE
ALLIANCE
SOON.



THIS IS
HEAVEN'S
WILL.

THE
PROCESS
HAS
ALREADY
BEGUN.

IT'S PAST THE
TIME SIMPLY
TO DREAM OF
A NEW
COUNTRY.

SELF-
SATIS-
FACTION.

"IT
WAS
LIKE
THE
WIND."

ALL I WANT
IS TO BE
ABLE TO
ANSWER...

Recommendations

If you enjoyed this volume of *BASARA*, then here are some more manga you might be interested in:

WILD COM

Wild Com by Yumi Tamura:

From *Basara*'s creator comes a trio of intriguing short stories. The *Wild Com* heroine has a secret power. Somehow she must overcome her denial and learn to embrace her abilities. The

Beasts of June is a dark little tale of people so far on the fringe of society they're barely human. *The Eye of the Needle* is a thriller about a rising star struggling with fame and a stalker. Each piece offers a different flavor of drama and action to satisfy a diversity of tastes.



© 1998 Yumi TAMURA/Shogakukan, Inc.

VAGABOND

Vagabond by Takehiko Inoue:

One of the best action artists out there, Takehiko Inoue puts his skills to the test in this extraordinary series. Inspired by Eiji Yoshikawa's classic samurai story *Musashi*, *Vagabond* is the tale of an unfocused soldier on the losing side of history. Takezo's initial goal of survival escalates the violence around him, turning him into a homicidal wildman. Through the way of the sword, he must transform himself from brute to saint.



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NAUSICAA

Nausicaä by Hayao

Miyazaki: A small kingdom's princess, Nausicaä has the depth of spirit and broadness of vision to become a legend. Torn from her people and thrown into the complex conflicts destroying post apocalyptic humanity, Nausicaä must somehow resolve the escalating battles that could end the world. Nausicaä's journey is as much a spiritual as a martial one, as is only appropriate from Hayao Miyazaki, director of such animation masterpieces as *Princess Mononoke* and the Academy Award-winning *Spirited Away*.



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Editor's comments

There are lots of different foods mentioned in this issue! The bag in which the priest of Aoba hid a dagger for Sarasa held mochi. Unlike the dried mochi Raizo was grilling in volume 15, this was fresh, soft mochi, probably sweetened.

Takumi mentions hoping to have red beans and rice to commemorate his draft notice. The colors red and white are considered celebratory, and this satisfying dish is traditionally used to celebrate just about everything...apparently even getting drafted.

That is, indeed, a squid tentacle sticking out of Kikune's mouth on page 161. Seasoned with MSG and sugar, this chewy, tasty dried snack is called *saki-ika* and makes a perfect accompaniment to sake and beer. Think it sounds gross? If you like seafood at all and take a single thing I write here to heart, let it be this—you *MUST* try *saki-ika* if given the chance. It's downright addictive.

The last food item is Tamon's *inaniwa udon*. Specially handmade from high quality wheat, these noodles are a delicacy from the northern town of Inakawa and were traditionally the food of local nobles.

Clockwork dolls (*karakuri ningyo* in Japanese) have been a part of Japanese culture for centuries. An old-time distraction for the idle rich, these clever devices can be made to perform any number of activities, even dance and carry tea. That Kikune can make and manipulate them suggests a clever, technical mind. Naturally someone with her interests and skills would carry tools of the trade with her. The item she has on pages 55 and 109 is a Japanese saw. Unlike those in the West, Japanese saws require the user to pull the blade toward them. They also have teeth on both sides.

The two names *Madam Butterfly*'s performers suggested for *Ageha-monshiro* and *monki*—are the names of two kinds of butterflies, the "small white" and "pale yellow."

The rather phallic monolith in the background on page 186 is likely a site of ancient cultural significance, perhaps even the center of Kazuno's Oyu stone circle.

